

Our Greeting to the Youngster Year.

As does the child come into life—
So cometh the bright New Year,
The born a simple untold birth
With joy, good will, and cheer.

The Old Year sighs—ne'er bids adieu
As he turns his last worn page,
His work is done—His life is o'er—
Alas, one year of age.

How many hearts are sad, forlorn—
How many prayers are said—
"May the New Year take from us our
grief
To give us joy instead."

We know not what the young babe holds
For us we cannot see,
We only greet with open arms—
The Youngster—1912.

—Jewett Clarke.



SHUCKIN' DE CO'N



CHRISTMAS was never celebrated to any great extent in the south back in the good old days 'fore de wah. New Year's day took its place among the masters, and the prolonged, rollicking "co'n shuckin'" supplied the slaves of Kentucky and Missouri especially with all the jollity they desired.

It was an institution peculiar to the South, peculiar not in being confined to those sections, but peculiar in the manner in which it was conducted. For husking bees have been known in New England since the mind of man remembers and Indian corn has been gathered.

When a "co'n shuckin'" was decided upon notices were sent out to the slaves of all adjoining plantations stating that on a certain night Judge S. or Squire B. would give a corn shuckin' of so many thousand bushels, and that all colored people, male and female, were invited to attend. Great preparations were made by "ole massa" and "ole missus" for this event, for, while he expected a good night's work in the shape of wagon loads of yellow corn, pleasure was to be the main part of the program.

Supper was always provided on a large scale, and generally consisted of two or three roasted pigs, turkeys, chickens, with side dishes of vegetables in equal proportion. Bushels of sweet potatoes were baked, boiled and fried, and hundreds of rich golden pumpkin pies were turned out of the ovens, done to a mouth-watering brown.

A band of musicians was engaged, for no "co'n shuckin'" would be complete without it. On those nights negroes worked not happily save to the twangling of the banjo and wailing of the fiddle.

A corn shuckin' always lasted three nights continuously on one plantation, and then the negroes moved on to the next, where three more were devoted to the corn of the owner, and so on until all the maize of the neighborhood had been husked.

About twilight the darkies began to arrive from all over the country. The "boys" clad in their suits of jeans, with that pride of the darky's heart, his "long-tailed, claw-hammer blue." Every negro who made pretensions to being "anybody" possessed one—in more or less conditions of wear.

The female portion of the gathering was coquettishly dressed in linsey woolsey frocks, with their heads tied



His long-tailed claw hammer blue.

up in flaming red bandanna handkerchiefs—the redder the better—and with a white handkerchief crossed upon their breasts.

They came in groups, and each party of huskers from a neighboring plantation was announced long before it arrived by the well-known tunes prevalent in those days floating down the road and over the fields as the happy boys and women hastened to the gathering. A favorite tune was this:

Yes, we's gwine to de shuckin',
Yes, we's gwine to de shuckin',
We's gwine to de shuckin' of de co'n.
An' we'll be dar in de mornin',
An' we'll be dar in de mornin',
We'll be dar in de mornin', shuah as yo's to'n.

As soon as the darkies were all assembled the oldest slave present went to "ole massa" and begged a piece of silver money. This was always expected, and a plantation owner would as soon have thought of having a "shuckin'" without corn as to be unprepared to produce the bit of silver on the first evening.

Taking this piece of silver, the ancient darky returned to the field and there performed a ceremony, the exact meaning of which has not come down to us. Whetting his jack knife upon the silver, he solemnly pronounced an invocation for a bountiful crop of corn the following year. And it is doubtful if the "ole massa" would have been any more willing to allow the husking to proceed without this kindly prayer than would his white-haired servitor, who by its means thus once a year stood in the attitude of high priest to the family he served.

After the preliminary prayer the "12 wise men" were chosen, and their first duty was to select two of the brawniest negroes in the company, who, when called out, with much pride at their distinction, indulged in a good humored contest of strength, which was known as "rassin' fo' de Capt'n." The victor became the master of ceremonies and upon him devolved the duty of seeing that no one shirked in work or entertainment.

The matter of the Captaincy being decided, the 12 wise men chose four big fellows, who formed a "pack saddle" by crossing their hands, the Captain was elevated upon it and carried half a dozen times around the heaps of corn while the darkies sang this melody or something akin to it:

When our day's am done
Don't we darkies hab a time;
When our day's am done
Don't we darkies cut a shine?

Back to our cabin we will go,
Back in de early morn',
But we'll be here in de evnin',
To do de shuckin' of de co'n.

Then the corn shuckin' proper began. Stacks of fuel had been placed at intervals of a few yards near the corn, and after they had been lighted, under the supervision of the "12 wise men," the fun began. As the corn was husked it was thrown into piles and would be hauled away in the morning. Twelve workers were selected for each heap of unhusked corn, and, as back in New England, the "red ear" was eagerly sought for, but with a different purpose. When a man got it he shied it at a big nigger's head, and if he hit the mark the unfortunate darky would not "marry for 10 years." If by shrewd dodging he missed it his happiness would be crowned within the year. If a dusky belle secured a

WONT MARRY FOR TEN YEARS



red ear she had the option of choosing a sweetheart from any of the darkies around the corn pile.

When 12 o'clock struck all hands dropped their work and hurried to the grove which always surrounded the old plantation home. On such occasions it was always decorated with lights, perhaps not equal to a carnival, but still rendering it very picturesque. Reverly and abandon followed to the enlivening darky melodies upon the fiddle, the banjo, the bones, the "massa and missus," by their presence, keeping the gaiety within bounds. But this did not hinder the music from being wafted on the air across the fields and through the woods to neighboring plantations.

After supper a chaplain was selected, who solemnly pronounced a parting benediction upon "ole massa and missus." And while wending their homeward way some such strains as these came floating back to the now silent home:

Down in dat co'n field,
Heah dat mo'ful soan';
Dem darkies am a-woopin',
Fo' massa's in de co' co' ground.



The Day for Resolutions.

The first day of the new year. What an hour for resolutions; what a moment for prayer! If you have sins in your bosom, cast them behind you now. In the last year God has blessed us; blessed us all. On some his angels waited, robed in white, and brought new joys; here a wife to bind men closer yet to Providence; and here a child, a new Messiah, sent to tell of innocence and heaven. To some his angels came clad in dark livery, velling a joyful countenance with unpropitious wings, and bore away child, father, sister, wife or friend. Still they were angels of good Providence, all God's own; and he who looks aright finds they also brought a blessing, but concealed and left it, though they spoke no word of joy. One day our weeping brother shall find that gift and wear it as a diamond on his breast.—Exchange.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT IN NEW YORK FOR BRIEF VISIT



Two or three days ago James Gordon Bennett dropped into the New York Herald office from Paris, sat down at his great white mahogany desk and went to work as though he had never been away from New York.

For nearly a third of a century the master of the Herald—whose residence is in Paris—has dropped into his New York office once every two or three years and sat down at his desk in instant and familiar touch with the most minute details of the vast organization which he directs.

The Herald office was as ready for him this time as it always has been.

DECLINES TO WEAR A HAT. BEARS ARE TOO PLENTIFUL.

New Yorker Courts Aborigine Styles in Choosing Attire.

The most eccentric character in all this region is Floyd Sickmond, or "Curly," as he is called, a robust man of past sixty years, whose boast is that he has not seen a sick day "in well-nigh onto sixty years." The year 'round he travels about in his shirt sleeves and without a hat. For many years he also went barefooted, but of late, on account of advancing age, he has taken to wearing shoes during extremely cold weather.

"Curly" is an employee of the Clyde hotel, and in zero weather, while others are wrapped in furs, he may be seen driving through the streets without gloves, hat, or coat, apparently unmindful of the cold. He asserts that his mode of living is conducive to health and longevity. He comes of a frail family, but thwarted fate, he declares, by adopting a mode of dress as nearly aboriginal as the law would allow.—Clyde, N. Y., special.

Owl Chased by Sea Gulls.

Officials of the Campana, when it arrived at Queenstown from New York a few days ago, reported that when south of Nova Scotia a bird was observed flying toward the ship. It was followed by a number of sea gulls, which were endeavoring to catch the stranger. However, the bird managed to evade its pursuers and, overtaking the Campana, fell exhausted on the deck. On examination it was found to be a snowy owl measuring thirty-eight and one-half inches from tip to tip of the wings.

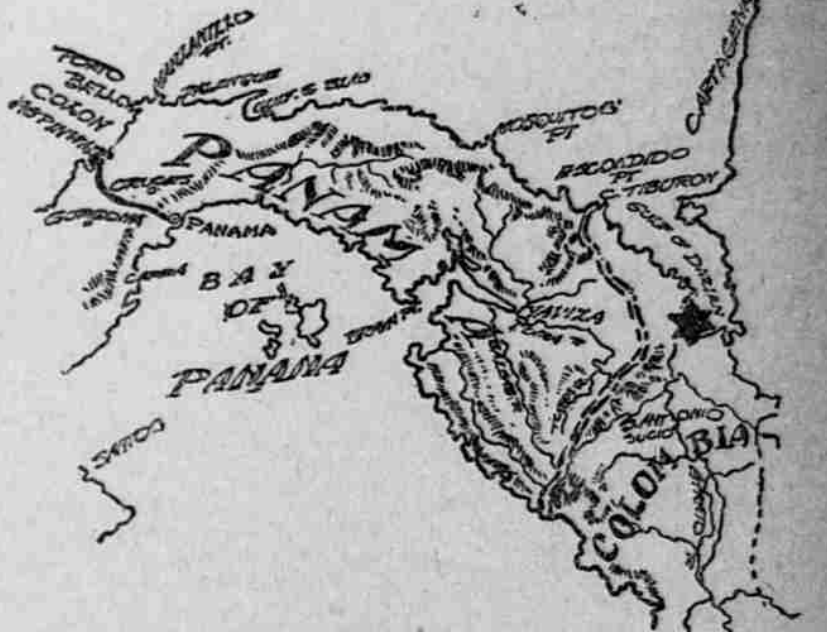
New Form of Advertisement.

Miss Stella Mayhew, an actress, is enjoying a season of deserved popularity at St. Paul. When the company with which she is playing arrived in the city the streets were in a filthy condition. Miss Mayhew advertised for a force of fifty volunteers to clean them and at the head of the gang that responded to her call she gave the down town thoroughfares a thorough scouring. Now the entire population is singing her praises and she is playing to crowded houses.

Near Physical Perfection.

Dr. Sargent, who is regarded as among the best living authorities on the subject, says that Arthur O. Christensen, a Harvard student, approaches physical perfection more nearly than any other man he has ever seen. Last week Christensen broke all strength records by lifting, in half an hour, 384,025.8 foot pounds. He is a slight, immature-looking young fellow, who stands 5 feet 9 inches tall and weighs barely 150 pounds. He is almost a vegetarian.

COLOMBIA MEANS TO MAKE EFFORT TO COERCE PANAMA



SCENE OF THREATENED WAR BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND PANAMA. (Star marks location of Gulf of Darien, where Colombian troops are said to have been landed to march to Panama.)

RECONCILED IN A HOSPITAL. "UNCLE JOE" AND THE SENATE.

Old-Time Animositities Forgotten in Presence of Misfortune.

In the early days of North Dakota Senator Jud La Moure and Alexander McKenzie, the latter famous as the most daring sheriff in Bismarck, were bitter personal and political enemies. Whatever one wanted done was sure to be opposed by the other, and they carried their enmity to each other to great and sometimes ridiculous extremes for men as level-headed as they were in ordinary matters. Each had a host of friends and these were arrayed in hostile camps, political, social and business. The two men have become reconciled, however. Some time ago McKenzie got into trouble in Alaska, and narrowly escaped a prison sentence for contempt of a local judge, from whose jurisdiction the Bismarckian removed a prisoner. After a hard fight McKenzie was released and returned east, broken in health. For months he has been lying in a St. Paul hospital, hovering between life and death and deserted by a majority of his former friends. Here his old enemy, La Moure, found him and at once took up his station at the bedside of the stricken man, ministering to his every want with the solicitude of a mother. Mainly owing to La Moure's careful nursing McKenzie is recovering his health and expects to leave the hospital in a week or two, when his old-time adversary will escort him to Bismarck. It is safe to say that the friendship thus established will never be broken. McKenzie a few years ago was a perfect specimen of physical manhood, standing 6 feet 4 inches and being built in proportion.

POPE PIUS IS AGING.

Pontiff Beginning to Feel Weight of His Responsibilities.

A traveler who has just returned from Rome was greatly impressed with the change in the appearance of the Pope. He was received by him the day after his accession to the pontifical throne, when he was ruddy, erect, gay and full of life. On this last occasion, however, he found him a little paler, a little more bowed, a little more subdued and less buoyant; in fact, a slight but perceptible change for the worse— a young man growing older. This change has come in less than four months, and is due to the difference in habits and work and the confinement. (The Pope goes in the open air less and less. In the beginning he took walks in the garden and regular exercises, but as his cares and duties increased he went less and less until he ceased altogether, confining his walks to the loggia overlooking Rome and even here he now seldom goes.)

Nature's Cure for a Cold.

Charles Gibson, the Indian editor, claims that consumption was never known by the Indian until he began to try to live like the white man in a house. "To cure a cold an Indian went to a mountain to camp and hunted and ate wild meat for forty-eight hours, which is now the easiest way to cure a cold on earth. You never contract a cold in a camp. It is curious, but is nevertheless true. Try it and be convinced. No one ever saw a tepee Indian with a cold or cough. Nature will cure you if you are not a coward and will go into camp and give nature a chance."

Cost of Living in the Waldorf.

Manager Hillard of the Waldorf-Astoria hotel, New York, says that an epicure living there in a suite of rooms can easily spend \$2,000 a day, but that, by eschewing alcoholic beverages and fine cigars and keeping tips within moderate limits a guest can bring his daily expenses down to \$8. For this sum he will be comfortably fed and housed, can command his share of service from the 1,500 employees and will be able to enjoy all the music, pictures, statuary and other endless luxuries which go with life in the great caravansary.

Crusade Against Profanity.

Headed by its secretary, Rev. Roland D. Sawyer, the Anti-Profanity league has begun a crusade in Boston, the league thinking that such a movement is much needed in the hub. Mr. Sawyer says it has come to pass that one cannot walk along the streets in Boston, travel in a street car or tarry in a public place without being compelled to hear shocking language. He thinks it is time the city government took action regarding the matter.

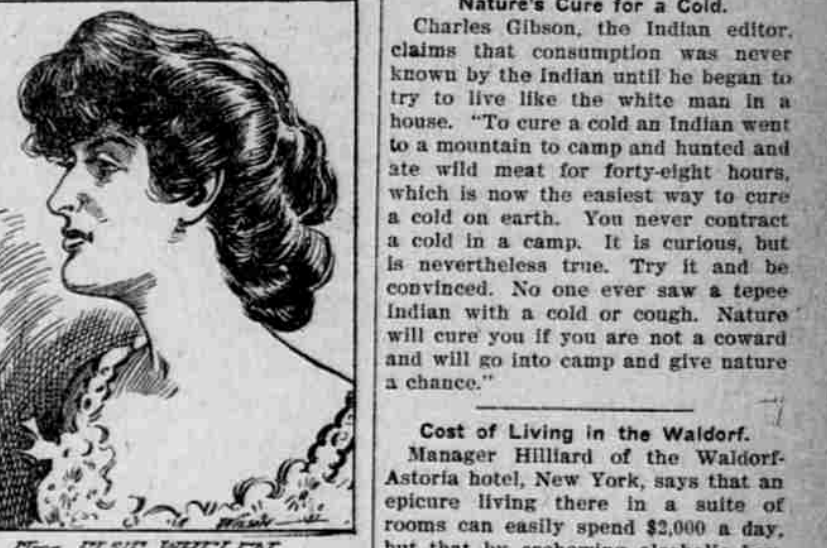
Ibsen's Days of Labor Over.

The latest news concerning Ibsen's health is of a serious kind. A Vienna doctor who recently visited him in Christiania reports that "he has practically lost his speech." The doctor says further: "Also his faculties are impaired. His loss of memory is particularly noticeable. In consequence of these defects he cannot work. Ibsen is, in fact, completely broken up. He presents the picture of a helpless old man."

ROBERT GOELET TO WED.

Wealthy Society Man Captures Heart of Noted Beauty.

It is said the engagement of Miss Elsie Whelen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Whelen of Philadelphia, to Robert Goelet, brother of the Duchess of Roxburghe, will soon be announced, and that the wedding will speedily follow. Miss Whelen is a noted beauty and was the belle of Newport last summer.



MISS ELSIE WHELEN

GOOD JOKE ON GOLFERS.

Girls Have Fun with Members of Aristocratic Club.

N. B. Coles and Daniel Bacon, two enthusiastic members of the new and aristocratic Country club of Lake-wood, N. J., had a match game of golf for \$1,000 a side recently. Each had a good record on the links, but neither was able to cover the ground in anything like good time, both experiencing great difficulty at two of the halves. Just as the match was concluded they discovered that a tomato can had been fitted neatly into one of the holes and that a row of pins had been stuck in the hard ground around the other. These obstructions had disastrous effect on the work of the players. It was discovered that some girl members of the club were guilty of playing this joke, and formal complaint has been lodged with George J. Gould, president of the club. The foolzlers are determined that some one shall suffer for the infamy, but it is not thought likely that any punishment will be inflicted.